



Snohomish County **Human Services**

2019

Intersections of Homelessness: Race, Ethnicity, and Household Composition

The mission of Human Services is to help all persons meet their basic needs and develop their potential by providing timely, effective human services and building community.

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Intersections of Homelessness: Race, Ethnicity, and Household Composition

Snohomish County
Human Services Department

Aligning with a spotlight on racial equity happening across the country, the Snohomish County Human Services Department (HSD) Office of Community & Homeless Services (OCHS) has been examining the Everett/Snohomish County Continuum of Care (CoC) to look for areas where racial disparities may exist. Often, evaluations of homeless systems focus on unsheltered versus sheltered, or families versus individuals, typically with subgroupings for special populations like youth, veterans, or those who are considered to be chronically homeless. Demographics like age, gender, race, and ethnicity are included, but tend to be characteristics, rather than a central focus. This report takes an intentional look at race and ethnicity in the Snohomish County Homelessness System, with the purpose of uncovering areas that may require more rigorous analysis.

Data Sources and Definitions

This report is the result of an internal analysis, utilizing 18 months' worth of data from Snohomish County's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), a database containing client- and service-level detail for homeless services projects including temporary housing, emergency shelter, and permanent housing. Additionally, this report contains data collected through the U.S. Census, the U.S. Census Poverty Data Tables, and the

annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count, which is a nationwide physical count and survey of folks experiencing homelessness on one night in January. The PIT Count is recognized as a sort of "snapshot" of homelessness rather than an exhaustive census count. Locally, the county is divided into quadrants, and volunteers cover these areas on foot, requesting to survey individuals they come upon who may be experiencing homelessness. More information can be found on the County's [PIT Count web page](#).¹

Snohomish County's HMIS operates under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) definition of homelessness – Category 1: Literally Homeless (lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence) and Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence. Persons who are "doubled up," or staying in the residence of family or friends, are not considered literally homeless and are not included in this analysis. This report also adopts HUD's categorization of race as American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White, and Multi-Racial. These six categories are at the level of granularity that HUD mandates the data be collected, so these are the available categories for this analysis. Additionally, the term "Latinx" is being used within this report as a conscious replacement for what has formerly been coined "Hispanic/Latino." This terminology change acknowledges the intersection of race, ethnicity, gender and ancestral origin.

What was assessed?

When formulating the scope of this initial investigation, a few measurable points of system contact arose that helped drive the analysis. These points are summarized by the following questions:

Is there a **difference between the racial/ethnic compositions** of persons:

- In the general population.

¹ Snohomish County's PIT Count page:
<https://snohomishcountywa.gov/2857/Point-In-Time>

- Experiencing poverty.
- Experiencing or at-risk of homelessness.

To access housing through Coordinated Entry, a housing assessment must be completed.

- Is there a difference in **assessment completion rates** between racial/ethnic groups?

During the housing assessment, households are assessed for vulnerabilities which factor into housing placement.

- Is there a difference in **Vulnerability Scores** by racial/ethnic groups?

Is there a difference in **permanent exit rates** by racial/ethnic groups exiting:

- Coordinated Entry.
- Homeless Housing Projects.

A Note on Methodology

For the purposes of this report, ethnicity and race are evaluated sequentially. The methodology is such that if a person identifies as Latinx, they are not further evaluated for inclusion in any race category. Elsewhere in the report, Latinx and persons belonging to racial minority groups may be grouped together and labeled as “People of Color.”

In this analysis, the race and ethnicity of households is determined as self-identified by the head of household. This approach was taken because the race and ethnicity of adults is likely to play a more dominant role in the disposition of the household when compared to the race and ethnicity of any children in the household. In instances where there is no adult present, an unaccompanied or parenting minor is assigned as the head of household.

- In **81.8%** of instances, the head of household is either the only adult or only

person (unaccompanied minor) in the household.

- In **95.6%** of households, the race and ethnicity of the head of household is representative of the entire household.
- In **2.3%** of instances, a household was classified as White when there were other adult minority household members.
- In **1.7%** of instances, a household was classified as a minority race when one or more of the other adults were White.
- In the remaining instances, the head of household or an adult member was of an unknown race and ethnicity, but there was a non-head of household member whose race and ethnicity were known, or households were classified as a specific minority, but had another adult of a different minority. Therefore, apparent disproportionality for specific racial and ethnic minority groups should be viewed with caution.

Are racial and ethnic minorities overrepresented in homelessness in Snohomish County?

In Snohomish County, persons in racial minority groups account for **21.6%** of the total population, according to the 2017 U.S. Census population estimate.² However, the [2018 PIT Count](https://snohomishcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/54339/2018-Point-In-Time-Report-PDF?bidId=)³ found that **27%** of persons experiencing homelessness on the night of January 22, 2018 were of a race other than White, as shown in Figure 1 on page 3. What accounts for this difference?

It is not surprising that the majority of people who experience homelessness are experiencing poverty. In fact, households who entered emergency shelters in Snohomish County during 2017 had an average monthly income of \$140.

² U.S. Census Population estimates, Snohomish County, Washington, July 1, 2017: <https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/PEP/2017/PE/PSR6H/0400000US53.05000?slice=Year~est72017>

³ Snohomish County's 2018 PIT Count Report: <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/54339/2018-Point-In-Time-Report-PDF?bidId=>.

When the Poverty Census⁴ is compared to the Snohomish County portion of the U.S. Census, racial disproportionalities quickly become apparent. However, the disparity in the number of persons in racial minority groups who experience poverty cannot fully account for the increased rate at which racial minorities are increasingly represented in homelessness.

Racial Minority Composition
Percent of Total Population

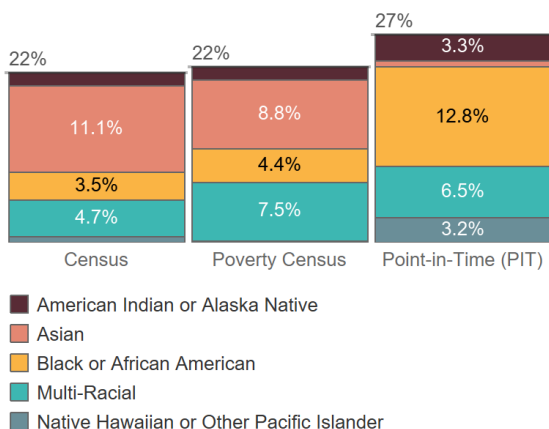


Figure 1

Of racial minority groups, homelessness in this region has the most disparate impact on people who are Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and American Indian or Alaska Native. While overrepresented in the Poverty Census (4.4% versus 3.5% of the U.S. Census), Black or African American becomes the largest minority group represented in the 2018 PIT Count (12.8%), even though in the U.S. and Poverty Census the largest minority group is Asian. Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islanders are overrepresented at 0.7% of the Census and 3.2% of the PIT Count. People identifying as American Indian or Alaska Native appear at twice the rate in the PIT Count (3.3%) as the Census (1.6%). Asian people are the only

underrepresented racial minority group, accounting for 11.1% of the Census and <1% of the PIT Count, while persons of Latinx ethnicity are overrepresented in the Poverty Census⁵ but are underrepresented in the PIT Count (see Figure 2).

Latinx Composition
Any Race; Percent of Total Population

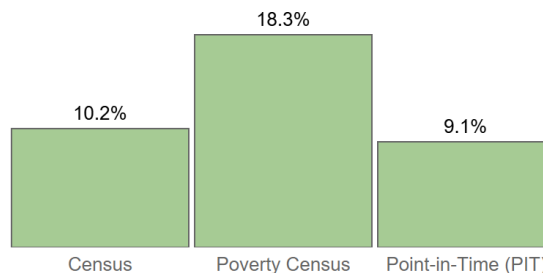


Figure 2

What is the racial and ethnic composition of the Homeless Housing System?

The composition of race and ethnicity within the homeless housing system is notably different when viewed by persons being served in a project compared to being viewed by households served.⁶ By person, the largest minority group is Latinx, but by household, the largest minority group is Black or African American. The overall proportion of White households (68.1%) is greater than the overall proportion of White persons when evaluated individually (60.3%), as shown in Figure 3 on the next page.

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau American Fact Finder, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months, Snohomish County, Washington, Year 2016:
https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmt/table/1.0/en/ACS/16_5YR/S1701/0500000US53061

⁵ The U.S. Census reports ethnicity as a characteristic alongside race in the aggregated data, so it is not possible to report these data together in one graph.

⁶ Demographic data are collected for each person being served by a project within the HMIS. A "household" in the HMIS is a group of individual persons who are seeking and obtaining services together.

Racial & Ethnic Composition
% of People/Households Active during 2017
All projects

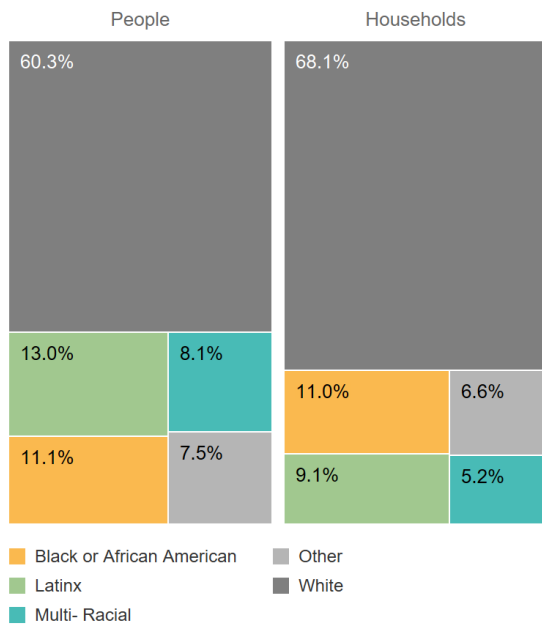


Figure 3

The difference of racial group compositions between people and households could have various interpretations; either in Multi-Racial families the head of household is disproportionately White, an idea disproven for this evaluation in the previous “A Note on Methodology” section, or that White households have a smaller household size and therefore account for a larger proportion of households and smaller proportion of people.

To explore these possibilities, the composition of race/ethnicity as it relates to the size of households was evaluated. As demonstrated in Figure 4, White households had the highest proportion of single person households in Calendar Year 2017 (CY2017).

Race/Ethnicity by Household Size
CY2017

	Number of Household Members			
	1	2	3 & 4	5 or more
American Indian or Alaska Native	64.5%	20.8%	13.0%	1.7%
Asian	52.6%	19.1%	24.3%	3.9%
Black or African American	62.8%	15.2%	15.6%	6.6%
Latinx	56.3%	14.1%	20.3%	9.5%
Multi- Racial	56.2%	20.4%	17.8%	5.7%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	35.5%	14.5%	28.5%	22.0%
White	66.1%	16.4%	14.2%	3.4%

Households which could not be classified by household type (<.1%) or race/ethnicity (1%) were excluded for clarity.



Figure 4

When paired with the overall higher number of White households, these data verify that the differences between racial composition of households and individuals is impacted by differences in household size.

Figure 4 also illuminates that Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander households are the least likely to have only one member (**35.5%**) in comparison to other groups. Conversely, it is also the only group with more than **10%** of households with five or more members (**19.9%**). More than **20%** of Asian, Latinx, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander households contain three or four members.

Household Composition

A deeper analysis of household size reveals further information about the impact of household composition (child-only, adult-only, or families with children). Figure 5 highlights a substantial difference in household type by race and ethnicity, most notably that **28.1%** of child-only households are Latinx. Given that only **9.4%** of households overall are Latinx, this divergence from the total

population is an area for future analysis to determine why this disproportionality exists. Also of interest is the diversity of families with children, where **38.7%** are People of Color, versus adult-only households, where only **26.3%** are People of Color.

Household Type by Race/Ethnicity
CY2017

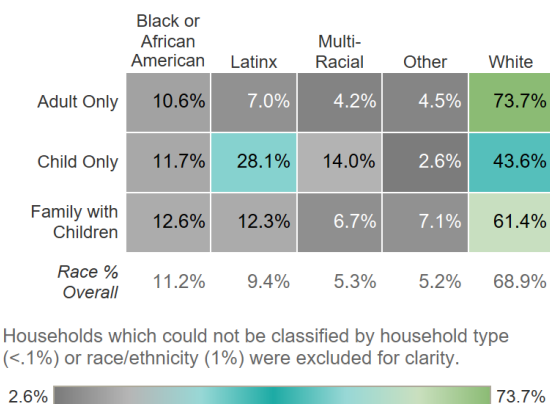


Figure 5

A slightly different view of these data (Figure 6) further highlights the contrast in household composition by race. Overall, **66%** of households are adult-only, **30%** are families, and **4%** are child-only. Latinx households comprise the largest proportion of both family (**39%**) and child-only (**11%**) households. Households classified as “Other or Unknown” (**38%**) and Multi-Racial (**37%**) make up the next largest proportion of families. Multi-Racial households also have a large proportion of child-only (**10%**) households in comparison to the overall average. White households by far constitute the highest proportion of adult-only households (**71%**), followed by Black or African American households with **63%**.

Household Composition
Households by Race & Ethnicity, CY2017

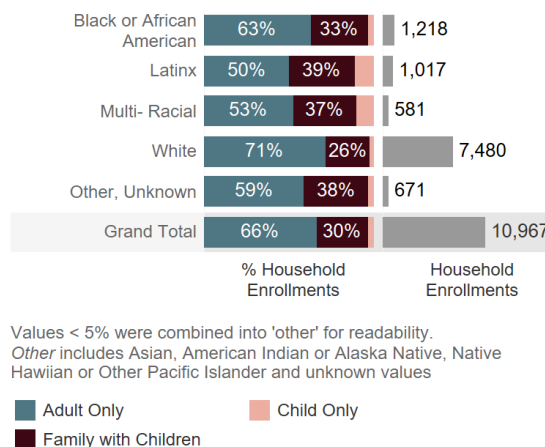


Figure 6

The Role of Housing Inventory

To begin to evaluate whom the homeless housing system is built to serve, it is important to define how a project's housing inventory is determined. The Everett/Snohomish County CoC contains multiple types of projects that provide services to people experiencing homelessness. These projects include **Coordinated Entry** (designed to create equitable and easy access to assessment and referrals to housing and other assistance), **Emergency Shelter** (providing immediate and temporary placement off the street), **Transitional Housing** (providing homeless individuals interim stability and support to successfully obtain and maintain permanent housing), **Rapid Rehousing** (emphasizing housing search and relocation services along with short- to medium-term rental assistance), **Permanent Supportive Housing** (providing permanent housing with indefinite leasing or rental assistance paired with services to assist homeless persons with disabilities), and **Other Permanent Housing** (providing permanent housing placement that is not limited to homeless persons with disabilities).

For projects serving families, providers generally report the average number of family members a given unit could support, which is called the “bed count.” However, if a unit is reported as having three beds but is being used by a family with only

two people, that third bed may not be occupied. Conversely, if a unit has three beds, it may serve a family of five. Most of the projects in the CoC are not limited to a number of physical beds, but rather a more dynamic average given the composition of project participants. The exception to these estimates is Rapid Rehousing, where beds are reported according to the number and type of beds occupied that night.

One of HUD's annually required reports is the Housing Inventory Count (HIC). The timeframe of this report coincides with the timeframe of the PIT Count, in that it is a snapshot of available inventory on one night during the last 10 days of January. In the 2018 HIC, which took place on January 22, 2018, it was estimated that the Everett/Snohomish County CoC had **519** Emergency Shelter beds, **111** Transitional Housing beds, **398** Rapid Rehousing beds, **1,569** Permanent Supportive Housing beds, and **506** Other Permanent Housing beds. Some of that inventory is limited to serving families or households with only children. Figure 7 shows that much of the inventory is either dedicated to serving people in families or expects to serve more people in families than people in adult-only or child-only households.⁷

Housing Inventory by Bed Type
January 22, 2018

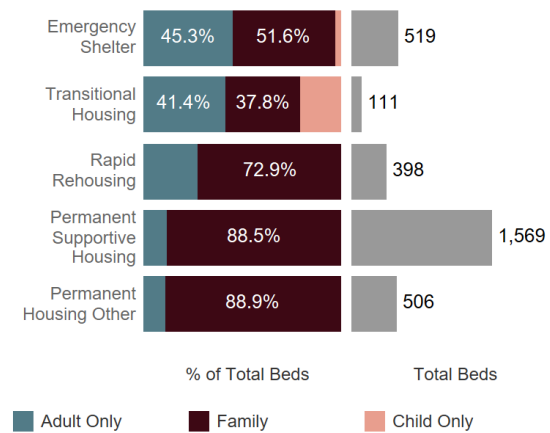


Figure 7

Household Composition and the Need for Housing

In order to understand equity within housing interventions, the need for housing and services must be evaluated. The best data source for observing this need is from the Coordinated Entry System, which contains data for all families with children and adult-only households seeking housing assistance. Data for child-only households in Coordinated Entry is not currently available,⁸ so Figure 8 provides a revised look at homeless housing availability for adult-only and families with children, converted to unit (household) inventory rather than individual beds.

⁷ Children (unaccompanied or parenting persons under 18) are unable to participate as heads of household in projects where they would be required to sign a lease or rental agreement (rapid rehousing, permanent supportive housing, or other permanent housing).

⁸ Coordinated Entry data for child-only households is maintained exclusively by a local youth organization, and these data were not able to be shared at the time of publication.

Housing Inventory by Unit Type

January 22, 2018, child-only households excluded

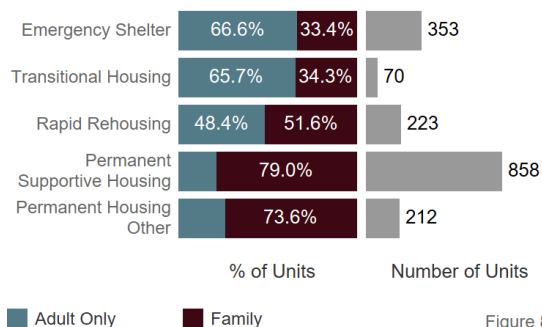


Figure 8

With the lens of which household types the inventory is designed to serve, the following sections provide a look into who sought housing through Coordinated Entry on January 22, 2018.

Household Composition at Coordinated Entry

Of active⁹ households in Coordinated Entry on January 22, 2018, **26%** were families, per Figure 9. However, it is notable that **73.4%** of the units in permanent housing projects (Rapid Rehousing, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Other Permanent Housing) were designated for families.

Household Composition

Coordinated Entry, Literally Homeless
Active January 22, 2018

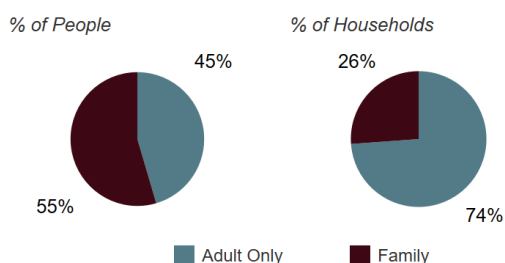


Figure 9

Comparing Housing Need with Inventory

Examining the household composition by project type in Figure 10 shows that there is variance when compared to Coordinated Entry as a baseline of housing need.

In all three of the permanent housing types, families occupy a disproportionate number of beds when compared to the overall population of Coordinated Entry. When viewed at the household level, the divergence between proportions of adult-only versus families with children remains apparent in many instances. Projects providing crisis housing such as Emergency Shelters and Transitional Housing projects disproportionately serve adult-only households, while Rapid Rehousing, Permanent Supportive Housing and Other Permanent Housing disproportionately serve families.

Household Type by Project Type

Active January 22, 2018

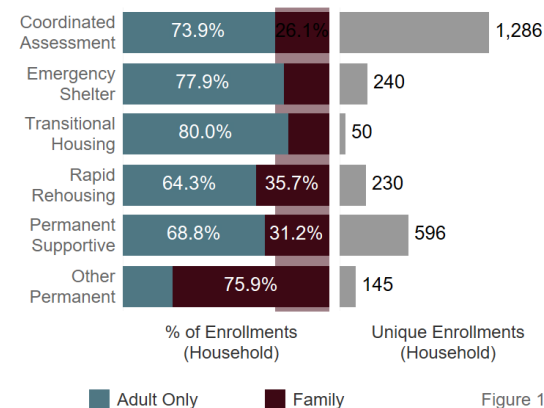


Figure 10

While **73.9%** of those seeking housing through Coordinated Entry on January 22, 2018 were adult-only households, overall only **61.1%** of all permanent housing was serving adult-only households.

⁹ "Active" in this instance relates to people who contacted the system and were found to be eligible for Coordinated Entry and had not yet been exited, regardless of whether or not they had completed a housing/vulnerability assessment.

There are several factors to explore in order to determine why adult-only households are being underserved.

Single-site projects, which are physical buildings containing particular unit configurations, may be more disposed to serve families. For example, if an agency posts an opening for a three-bedroom unit in a single-site project, that unit is likely to be filled with a family. Additional analysis is needed to determine the viability and implementation of shared housing as an option to maintain these units dedicated to serving homeless persons while decreasing the disproportionality between unit type availability and the household composition of those in need of housing.

For scattered-site rental assistance projects, where participants are able to seek housing anywhere in the community and choose bedroom configurations based on their particular household composition, additional analysis is needed to understand how availability is being reported in Coordinated Entry to determine if these project openings are unnecessarily targeting families.

How does prioritization and assessment of vulnerability impact housing placement by household type?

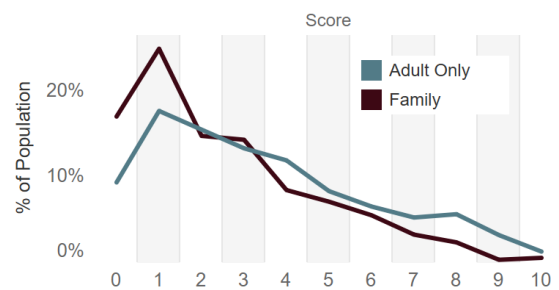
During the Coordinated Entry housing assessment, participants are asked a series of questions designed to evaluate their level of vulnerability by housing navigators¹⁰ while living homeless. These questions are primarily centered on critical medical conditions like kidney disease, heart conditions, diabetes, and cancer; mental health issues, current problematic use of drugs or alcohol; as well as a person's history of being attacked, beaten, forced, or tricked into doing something they did not want to do. Answers to these questions are rolled up into a "vulnerability score." The higher the calculated score, the more

vulnerable a person is considered for establishing priority for housing referral.

Snohomish County's Coordinated Entry system utilizes the CoC's stated [Orders of Priority for Homeless Housing Beds](#),¹¹ which includes prioritization given to chronically homeless individuals and families with the longest histories of homeless and the most severe service needs. When length of time homeless and service needs are equal, the vulnerability score determines who receives a housing referral first.

Systemwide, there are very few families who have long histories of homelessness, and their service needs, as currently measured, are comparatively lower than those in adult-only households. One hypothesis for the disparate placement of families in permanent housing may be that families are being assessed as more vulnerable in Coordinated Entry, and therefore receive a higher vulnerability score and higher priority to receive referrals to housing projects. However, a look at the distribution of vulnerability scores in Figure 11 shows that family scores tend to be lower on the scale.

Distribution of Vulnerability Score
Households entered between 7/1/2017 to 6/30/2018



Scores over 10 (< 2%) not shown for readability.

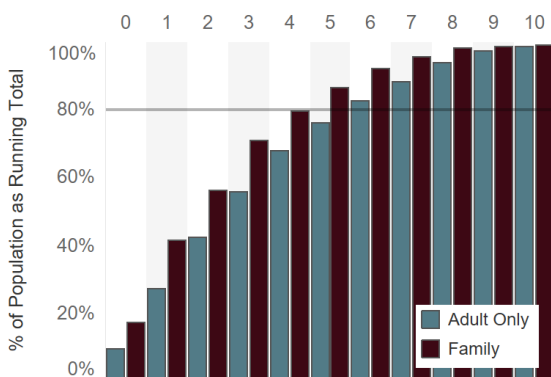
Figure 11

¹⁰ Housing navigators assist participants in obtaining market-rate housing, if appropriate, and work with participants to reduce barriers to housing access and retention, in addition to providing direct referrals to mainstream resources such as employment and legal assistance, behavioral health services, healthcare, etc.

¹¹ Everett/Snohomish County CoC's Orders of Priority for Homeless Housing Beds:
https://snohomishcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/12699/Attachment-H_CoordinatedEntryAssessmentPolicy#page=29

As shown in Figure 12, **80%** of families score **4** or less on the vulnerability scale. In contrast, a score of **6** or less encapsulates **80%** of adult-only households. This indicates that a larger proportion of family households are scoring lower on the vulnerability scale than adult-only households, which is proven to be true as the average score for families is **2.6**, compared to **3.6** for adult-only households. Even the difference in the percentage of families scoring a **0** on the vulnerability scale (**17%**) versus the percentage of adult-only households scoring **0** (**9%**) has been found to be statistically significant.¹² This seems to contradict the idea that families are being assessed as more vulnerable than adult-only households; therefore, the investigation into other factors must continue to explain the disproportionality.

Vulnerability Score as a Running Total
Score by Household Type, 7/1/2017 to 6/30/2018



Persons with scores over 10 (<2%) were excluded from the chart to improve readability but are still included in the running total.

Figure 12

Household Type as a Factor

The information in previous sections demonstrates that family households are disproportionately housed, and that People of Color are more likely to be members of family households within the CoC's homeless housing system. The following sections will center on household type, evaluating adult-only and family households separately to determine if race and

ethnicity are further factors in receiving homeless housing services and achieving permanent housing outcomes.

Adult-Only Households

In addition to differences highlighted above, adult-only households experience homelessness in other ways that are unique when compared to families with children. One such difference is related to HUD's definition of "Chronic Homelessness," which includes, in part, that a participant has a diagnosable long-term or permanent condition which impedes their ability to live independently. The Everett/Snohomish County CoC has been found to have a higher rate of adult-only households with participants suffering from disabling conditions, and often with greater severity and complexity than family households. The rate of adult-only households reporting disabling conditions is **84.2%**, compared to family households at **63.4%**.

Housing Assessment Completion Rates

As explained on page 8, participants must meet with their housing navigator and complete the housing assessment in order to receive a housing referral through Coordinated Entry. There are instances, however, when participants do not complete this assessment, meaning they do not have the opportunity to receive a housing referral. These households may have otherwise resolved their housing crisis or may have lost contact with the system.

Illustrated in Figure 13, assessment completion rates vary between racial and ethnic groups, with Asian households having the lowest completion rate at **25%** (out of **16**) and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander households having the highest at **47.4%** (out of **19**). However, due to the small sample size, neither of these averages varies significantly in comparison to households of other races.

¹² All figures reported to hold statistical "significance" have been evaluated at a p-value of less than .05.

Assessment Completion Rate

Adult Only Households, 7/1/2017 to 6/30/2018

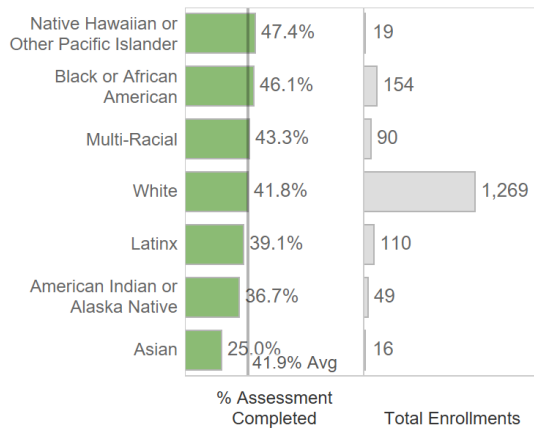


Figure 13

Vulnerability Score

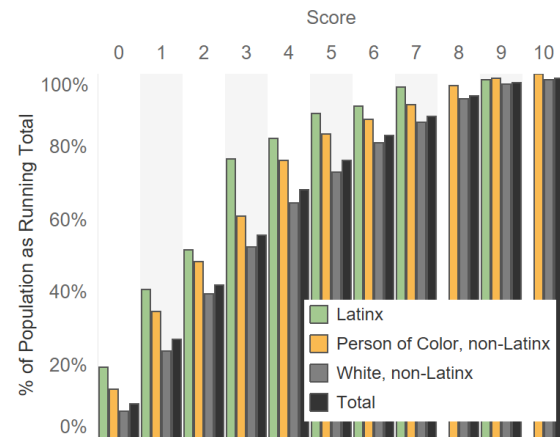
As introduced on page 8 of this report, all Coordinated Entry participants who complete the housing assessment with a navigator are asked a series of questions related to their level of vulnerability while being unhoused. These questions cover, in part, severe medical conditions, repeated crisis service usage, and the need for life-sustaining medical interventions. Answers to these questions are rolled up into a “vulnerability score;” the higher the score, the more vulnerable a person is thought to be while living homeless. Since this vulnerability score is used in conjunction with the CoC’s Orders of Priority for Homeless Housing Beds, variances in this score become important to examine when evaluating equitable distribution of housing referrals.

Figure 14 shows that, overall, **68%** of adult-only households score a **4** or below on the vulnerability assessment. But some racial and ethnic minority households are represented at greater proportions in these lower-vulnerability scores than others. Of non-Latinx People of Color, **75%** score a **4** or lower, while **83%** of Latinx households score a **4** or lower.

Vulnerability Score as a Running Total

Score by Race, 7/1/2017 to 6/30/2018

Adult Only Households



Persons with scores over 10 (<1%) were excluded from the chart to improve readability but are still included in the running total.

Latinx n=54, Person of Color (non-Latinx) n=155, White (non-Latinx) n= 577

Figure 14

Further analysis is needed to determine the reason for this disparity. One area to investigate is the potential cultural differences in the perception of the vulnerability questions. This type of qualitative analysis is being addressed at the time of publication, and will be included and expanded upon in further explorations.

Is there a difference in the proportion of exits to permanent housing by racial and ethnic groups?

Before assessing differences in outcomes, it is important to examine if there are differences in system access. While data are not available for populations that may be homeless but who are not accessing Coordinated Entry, data can be examined for those who interact with various parts of the homeless housing system.

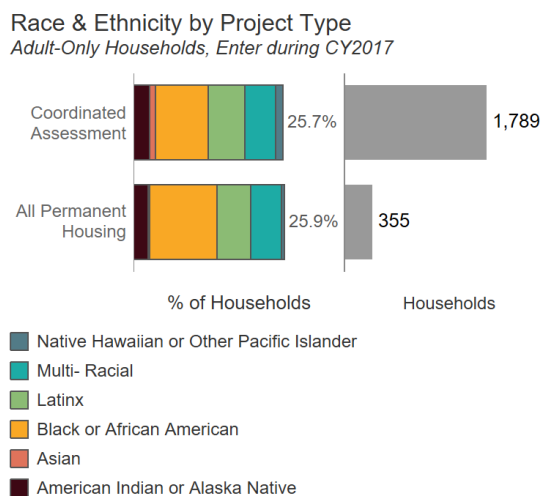


Figure 15

By combining all permanent housing types, it is evident that there is no difference in the proportion of People of Color enrolled in Coordinated Entry versus permanent housing, per Figure 15. There is a slightly higher proportion of Black or African American households in permanent housing than in Coordinated Assessment (**11.5%** versus **9.2%**), but since these values are statistically similar, they do not actually represent a major difference.

An additional measureable point of contact with the homeless housing system is a participant's "move-in" date – the date they obtained a lease and moved into their permanent housing unit. Figure 16 examines the proportion of Adult-Only households who moved into a unit, showing that there is no significant difference in move-in rate for People of Color compared to White, non-Latinx households.

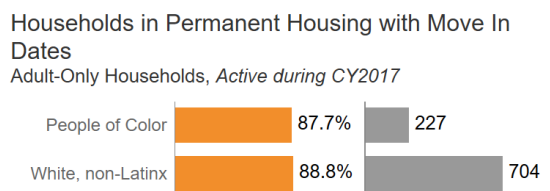


Figure 16

One measure of the success of homeless housing is the rate at which participants exit Coordinated

Entry into a non-homeless destination, known as becoming permanently housed. Figure 17 shows that the overall exit to permanent rate for adult-only households is **22.9%**, with the highest at **30.5%** for Black or African American households (**154** total households) and the lowest at **12.5%** for Asian households (**16** households). Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander households exit to permanent housing at a rate of **15.8%**, while Latinx households exit to permanent destinations at a rate of **20.9%**. However, due to low population sample sizes, these comparative findings based on race and ethnicity do not represent a significant difference in exit rate experiences.

Successful Exits by Race & Ethnicity
Adult Households, 7/1/2017 to 6/30/2018

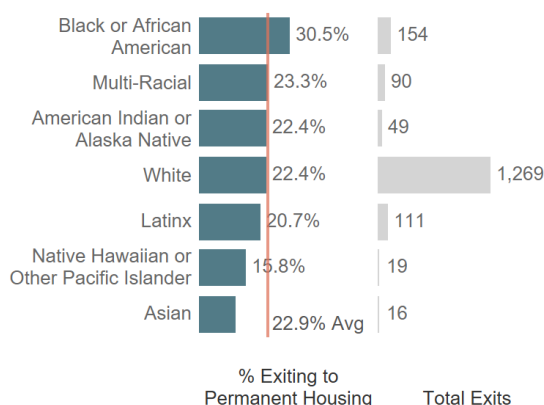


Figure 17

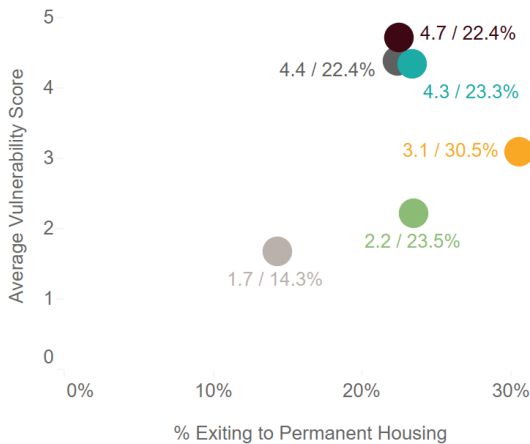
What is the average score for those exiting to permanent by race/ethnicity?

Depending on available housing inventory and system interventions (e.g. mediation services, rental application assistance), having a low vulnerability score (and consequently a lower likelihood of receiving a housing referral) does not necessarily mean that someone will not attain permanent housing.

In Figure 18, Black and African American households are shown to have the highest successful exit rate at **30.5%**, yet their vulnerability score is close to the overall median score for households with successful exits (**3**). In contrast,

American Indian or Alaska Native households have the highest average vulnerability score (**4.7**) and one of the lowest exit to permanent rates at **22.4%**.

Average Score and Successful Exit Rate
by Race/Ethnicity
Adult Only Households, 7/1/2017 to 6/30/2018



Racial groups with fewer than 10 values were combined.

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Black or African American
- Latinx
- Multi-Racial
- Other
- White

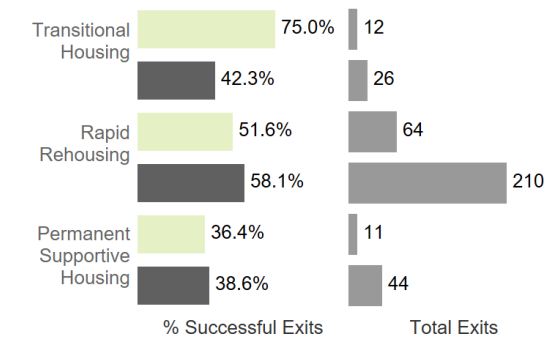
Figure 18

Contrary to expectation, the average vulnerability score for those exiting Coordinated Entry to a permanent housing destination (**4**) was slightly lower than the average score of those exiting to other or unknown destinations (**4.3**). Further evaluation is needed to determine if there is continued disproportionality in homeless households that enter into permanent housing projects versus those that attain permanent housing without an ongoing subsidy.

Per Figure 19, People of Color successfully exit Transitional Housing projects at a higher rate than White, non-Latinx households. However, the population size is small for this project type, so further investigation is needed to analyze successful exits over multiple years. Additionally,

the rate of exit between these two groups for both Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing are statistically similar.

Successful Exits by Project Type
Adult-Only Households, CY2017



Other Permanent Housing was excluded. There were fewer than 10 total exits for this project type.

■ People of Color ■ White, non-Latinx

Figure 19

Family Households

In the Everett/Snohomish County CoC, family households differ from adult-only households in several ways. As mentioned in earlier sections, family households are more often People of Color than adult-only households. Another difference is found in the 2018 PIT Count, where the most frequently reported causes of homelessness for families with children were lack of affordable housing, job loss, and family crisis, compared with adult-only households who indicated that family crisis, job loss, and drug and alcohol use prompted their homelessness.

Families also have shorter episodes of homelessness on average. Families enrolled in emergency shelter during the 2018 Federal Fiscal Year were homeless for an average of **187** days, versus adult-only households who averaged **239** days while homeless.

When evaluating disabling conditions, heads of households in families report fewer conditions than adult-only households. In fact, more than twice as many family households (**36.6%**) report having no conditions at all, compared to adult-only

households (**15.7%**). Additionally, family heads of household report fewer co-occurring conditions, like a mental health issue with a chronic illness. Where **30.1%** of adult-only households reported co-occurring or tri-morbid conditions (the combination of mental health, substance abuse, and a physical impairment or chronic illness), only **16%** of families reported having combinations of disabling conditions.

Housing Assessment Completion Rates

On average, family households completed the housing and vulnerability assessment at a rate of **54.5%** (see Figure 20 for more detail). Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander households had the lowest completion rate at **50%**, though that figure was not found to be statistically significant. American Indian or Alaska Native families had the highest completion rate, at **81.8%**. It is possible that a larger sample size may reveal statistically significant differences that were not identified in this data set.

Assessment Completion Rate
Family Households, 7/1/2017 to 6/30/2018

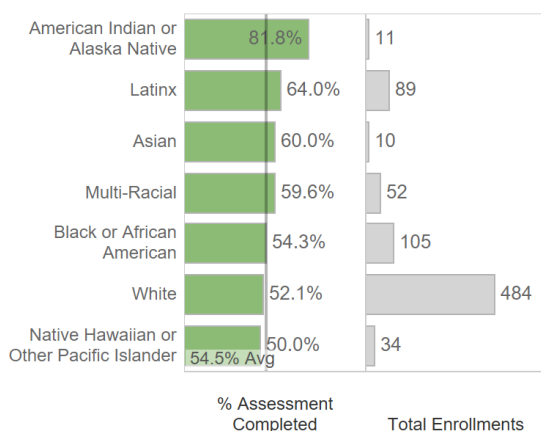


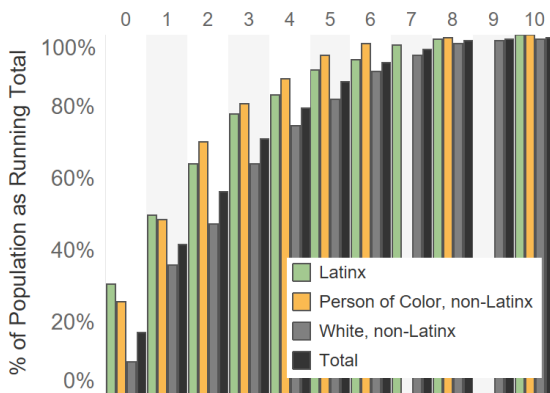
Figure 20

Vulnerability Score

As previously discussed on page 10, for adult-only households, disparity in vulnerability scores became statistically significant when assessing those scoring **4** or below. However, per Figure 21, for families with children the disparity is even apparent in the proportion of families that score **0**: **17%** of families in the entire population score a **0**, but this percentage jumps to **32%** for Latinx families and **26%** for non-Latinx Families of Color. This suggests that vulnerabilities experienced by Families of Color may not be fully captured on the current housing and vulnerability assessment. The national movement toward prioritizing those with the longest histories of homelessness and highest service needs may not adequately account for systemic issues that present themselves in other ways, such as “network impoverishment,” a term coined by the Center for Social Innovation’s Supporting Partnerships for Anti-Racist Communities (SPARC) Phase One Study Findings.¹³ This phenomenon addresses not only individual cases of poverty and homelessness, but the lack of resources of an entire network, due to historical systemic economic inequities in areas such as employment opportunities and wealth accumulation. Further research is needed to uncover potential reasons for the disparate vulnerability scores found in Snohomish County’s data.

¹³ SPARC Phase One Findings: <https://center4si.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/SPARC-Phase-1-Findings-March-20181.pdf>

Vulnerability Score as a Running Total
Score by Race, 7/1/2017 to 6/30/2018
Family Households



Persons with scores over 10 (<1%) were excluded from the chart to improve readability but are still included in the running total. Latinx n=69, Person of Color (non-Latinx) n=124, White (non-Latinx) n= 253

Figure 21

Is there a difference in the proportion of exits to permanent housing by racial and ethnic groups?

In comparison to the proportion of People of Color in Coordinated Entry, a slightly greater proportion of Families of Color are entering Rapid Rehousing and Other Permanent Housing, but a slightly smaller proportion are entering Permanent Supportive Housing, as shown in Figure 22.

Racial & Ethnic Composition
Households by Project Type, Family Households
People of Color, Entered during CY2017

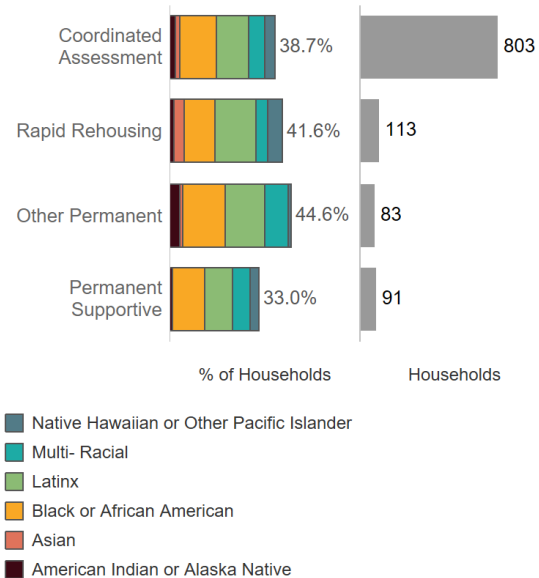


Figure 22

Upon further analysis, the difference in the proportion of minority households was not found to be statistically significant between Coordinated Entry at **38.7%**, Rapid Rehousing at **41.6%**, Permanent Supportive Housing at **33%**, or Other Permanent Housing at **44.6%**.

Latinx families comprise **11.6%** of those in Coordinated Entry, but **15%** of those in Rapid Rehousing. Again, due to the small number of households, additional data are needed to determine possible significance.

Overall, **40.2%** of households who enrolled in permanent housing projects were Families of Color, though this does not deviate from the entire population average when evaluating families as well as adult-only households. Additionally, once enrolled in permanent housing, Families of Color have a comparable rate of obtaining a lease, per Figure 23.

Households in Permanent Housing
with Move In Dates
Family Households, Active during CY2017

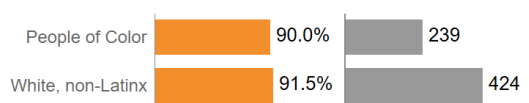


Figure 23

Figure 24 shows that, overall, family households exit Coordinated Entry to permanent housing at a rate of **37.6%**, which is **50%** higher than the permanent exit rate for adult-only households. Rates vary between racial and ethnic groups, with Asian having the highest rate (**50%** out of **10** families) and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander at less than half that rate (**23.5%** out of **34** families), though larger population samples would be needed to determine if these differences are reflective of significant trends.

Successful Exits from Coordinated Entry
by Race & Ethnicity
Family Households, 7/1/2017 to 6/30/2018

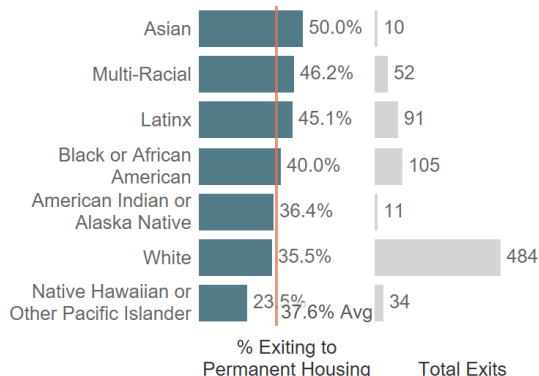


Figure 24

What is the average score for those exiting to permanent by race/ethnicity?

As has been previously stated, a low vulnerability score (and therefore lower likelihood of receiving a housing referral) does not automatically equate to a lower rate of exit to a permanent destination. Likewise, a higher score does not automatically equate to a higher successful exit rate. Figure 25 shows that, while White and Multi-racial families

have the highest average vulnerability score (**4.1**), White families also have one of the lowest successful exit rates (**35.5%**). Latinx family households fall in the middle range of average vulnerability scores (**3.1**), though they have the highest successful exit rate (**49.5%**). Evaluation of any potential correlation between these two metrics will continue for future populations and over multiple years of data collection.

Average score by Race/Ethnicity
by Percent Permanent Housing Rate
Family Households, 7/1/2017 to 6/30/2018

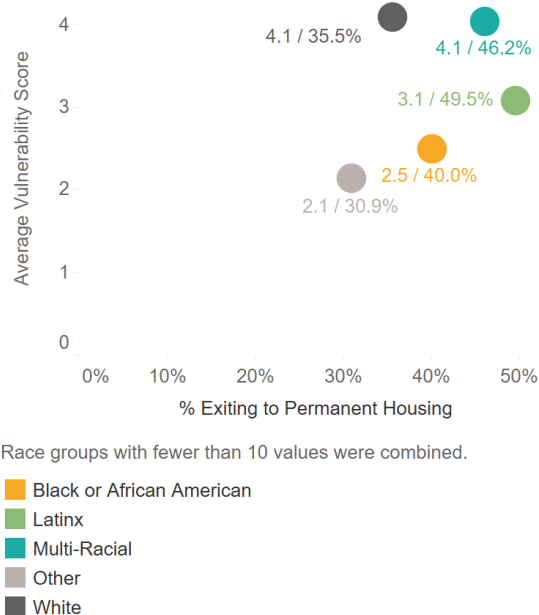


Figure 25

Figure 25 compares overall successful exit rates, showing that family households exit to permanent destinations at a rate of **66.3%**, which is **3.7** times higher than the rate for adult-only households at **17.7%**. However, due to different population sizes in the two groups, the total number of adult-only households that exit to permanent housing is greater at **321** in comparison to **234** total family households exiting to permanent housing destinations

Notably, the rate at which households that exited to permanent housing during CY2017 and

subsequently returned to homelessness in the 6 months following their exit differs substantially between these groups. Family households from that timeframe had a rate of return of **3%** compared to **8.1%** in returns for adult-only households.

Successful Exits by Project Type
Family Households, CY2017

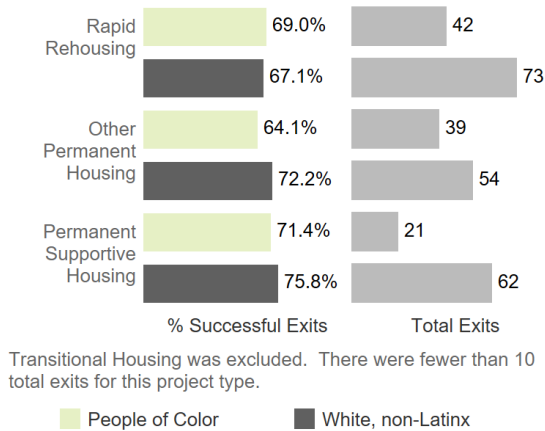


Figure 26

Figure 26 highlights that the rate of exit to permanent housing for Families of Color and White, non-Latinx families are comparable; the slight differences in percentage were not found to be statistically significant for this population.

Conclusion and Ideas for Further Study

This analysis was conducted by internal staff to identify areas needing further analysis and to provide a framework to discuss racial equity in the local homeless housing system. The time period was restricted in most cases to 12 months. Because there was no year-over-year comparison, generalizations cannot be made for other time periods.

This research confirms that, when compared to the U.S. Census estimates for Snohomish County, People of Color were overrepresented in the 2016 Poverty Census, the 2018 PIT Count, and the homeless housing system at large in 2017.

It was also determined that there was a higher proportion of People of Color experiencing homelessness in families rather than adult-only households. It was demonstrated that the homeless housing system disproportionately served families during the time period evaluated. In every area assessed, families fared better than adult-only households.

To better parse out the experience of the homeless housing system as it relates to race and ethnicity, families with children and adult-only households were assessed separately. Across all races and ethnicities, families completed housing assessments at a rate of **54.5%** compared to adult-only households at **41.9%**. While families were consistently assessed as less vulnerable (having an average vulnerability score of **2.6** versus **3.6**), their rate of exit to permanent housing was **3.7** times that of adult-only households (**66.3%** versus **22.9%**).

Assessment completion rates for adult-only households were statistically similar regardless race or ethnicity. However, the completion rate for Asian participants, at only **25%**, presents an opportunity for a more nuanced analysis. The assessment completion rate for Latinx families, at **64%**, was nearing statistical significance as non-Latinx families had a completion rate of **53.4%**. In both of these sub-populations, however, the rates may have been impacted by the small population size, so further analysis is needed.

This initial analysis uncovered that a larger proportion of People of Color score a **4** or lower on the vulnerability scale when compared to White, non-Latinx adult-only households. This was also true for family households where the difference was significant even for the proportion of households who scored **0**. This finding is a prompt for further investigation into the CoC's vulnerability assessment questions and scoring method, which aligns with nationwide query and evaluation of other vulnerability assessment tools in use throughout the country.

Another notable finding of this report is that, for the evaluation's timeframe, Black and African American adult-only households were found to have the highest rate of successful exit from the homeless housing system, while American Indian or Alaska Native households had the lowest known rate of successful exit. It is possible that qualitative analysis can further illuminate these differences as research into the CoC's Coordinated Entry system continues.

This evaluation found that, for family households, the proportion of each racial and ethnic group enrolled in Coordinated Entry was comparable to the proportions enrolled in Permanent Housing. Furthermore, once enrolled in permanent housing projects, the rate of lease obtainment for Families of Color compared to White, non-Latinx families was nearly the same. Permanent exit rates across populations for family households were also found to be comparable, while average vulnerability scores were found to be not directly correlated with the rates of permanent exit.

This initial report raises many areas for additional study. Going forward, the Everett/Snohomish County CoC plans to continue to investigate the report's findings, including:

- How to address the overrepresentation of racial minority groups as a whole and underrepresentation of Latinx persons in the Point-in-Time Count.
- The reasons why Latinx youth are overrepresented in our homeless housing system.
- How current inventory disproportionately serves family households.
- How vulnerability scores differ by race and ethnicity, and specifically how Latinx and other People of Color are assessed as less vulnerable regardless of household type.
- Monitoring our homeless housing system for differences in milestone attainment by race and ethnicity.

The lack of Coordinated Entry data for child-only households prohibits analysis at this time. Moving forward, the Everett/Snohomish County CoC looks forward to collaboration with youth services providers for continued data exploration, creating a comprehensive view of services for the county's entire homeless population.

This preliminary report is a catalyst for deeper analysis, including a longitudinal study of population changes over time, investigation into population proportions within homeless prevention services, as well as an examination of the length of time racial and ethnic groups spend homeless and later return to homelessness. Additionally, a comprehensive review of the CoC's Coordinated Entry System is currently underway, including qualitative analysis being conducted by a local ethnographer. This will include a thorough study of system access, the role of outreach, potential assessment bias, and interviews with former participants addressing long-term permanent housing outcomes, including feedback from Coordinated Entry staff. As both the quantitative and qualitative investigation continues, Snohomish County will remain centered on addressing racial and ethnic disproportionality while serving our community's vulnerable residents.

Appendix: Links and Resources

1. Snohomish County Homeless Management Information System:
<https://snohomishcountywa.gov/756/Homeless-Management-Information-System>
2. Snohomish County Point-in-Time Count Page:
<https://snohomishcountywa.gov/2857/Point-In-Time>
3. Snohomish County 2018 PIT Report:
<https://snohomishcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/54339/2018-Point-In-Time-Report>
4. United States Census Bureau:
<https://www.census.gov/en.html>

5. U.S. Census Poverty Data Tables:

<https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/poverty/data/tables.html>

6. 2017 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2017-AHAR-Part-1.pdf>

7. Snohomish County Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures, including Attachment A: Orders of Priority for Homeless Housing Beds:

https://snohomishcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/12699/Attachment-H_CoordinatedEntryAssessmentPolicy

8. SPARC Phase One Findings:

<https://center4si.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/SPARC-Phase-1-Findings-March-20181.pdf>